

STATE OF IDAHO
Department of Fish and Game
Joseph C. Greenley, Director

Quarterly Project Progress Report
CLEARWATER RIVER DEVELOPMENT OF
SPRING CHINOOK AND STEELHEAD STOCKS

Project No. 88E25030

Contract No. 03-6-208-00029

Period Covered: April 1 to June 30, 1976

Columbia River Fisheries Development Program

July, 1976

Clearwater River Development of Spring Chinook and Steelhead Stocks

ABSTRACT:

Indian Creek, Crooked River and Red River incubation channels were all operated this season. Traps were installed at Indian Creek on time, but the survival has been low. Approximately 205,000 chinook smolts were released in the South Fork Clearwater system from Rapid River Hatchery and another 167,000 were released in the Lochsa river system from Sandpoint Hatchery.

REPORT OF PROGRESS:

A channel tender was hired to watch Indian Creek channel this winter; however, when I traveled into the channel during April, I discovered his snowmobile was broken and he was not able to reach the channel very often. It was also apparent from the condition of the channel that it had not been monitored very closely.

The road over Nez Perce Pass was plowed and passable by May 3 this year and the traps installed on the same day. Few fry had migrated from the channel at that time and the West Fork Ranger District assured me there would be someone monitoring the channel seven days a week during the migration period. I was expecting a substantial number of fry to be enumerated from the channel this season; however, when the traps were shut down the 28th of June, though the final figure had not been determined, it appears only 400,000 fry will be counted. This figure represents about 20 percent of the eyed eggs planted in the channel last fall and was about half the anticipated total.

On the 28th of May, 130,000 fry were being held and I traveled to the channel by helicopter. I released 62,900 of those fry into Storm Creek at Storm Creek Flat on the upper Selway, and 66,900 fry at Cooper's Flat on White Cap Creek. A fire bucket borrowed from the Clearwater Potlatch Timer Protective Association was used with the helicopter in conjunction with an airstone-oxygen bottle hookup to plant the fry and worked very well. I will try this method in the future under the right circumstances.

Chinook fry captured at Red River and Crooked River channels were released in Newsome Creek. On May 26th I netted approximately 4,050 fry from the Red River channel and 24,120 fry from the Crooked River channel. These fry were transported by vehicle to Newsome Creek where equal amounts were released at Nugget Creek and the Beaver Creek road cutoff.

The channel tenders who watched Red River and Crooked River channels were well worth the money. There were several periods when ice flows and freezing could have completely eliminated survival if the tenders had not spent hours correcting the situation. I anticipate hiring tenders for the channels next season.

The project paid the West Fork Ranger District \$1,000 for the responsibility of maintaining flows at Indian Creek channel, plus the enumeration and distribution of fry within the Magruder area.

Chinook Smolt Releases

Over 205,000 chinook smolts reared at Rapid River Hatchery were released in various sections of the South Fork Clearwater River and selected tributaries during mid-April (Table 1).

Table 1. Spring chinook smolts released in the South Fork Clearwater River, 1976.

Date	Location	Number per pound	Amount
April 13	Red River Ranger Station	20	46,000
April 14	Deadwood Bridge	17	30,100
April 14	Crooked River Bridge	20	36,000
April 14	Red River Ranger Station	20	20,000
April 15	Newsome Creek Bridge	17	56,100
April 15	Crooked River Bridge	17	<u>17,000</u>
Total			205,700

Nearly 167,000 more chinook smolts were received from Sandpoint Hatchery during the last of April and early May. These smolts were released into the upper Lochsa River and selected tributaries (Table 2).

Table 2. Spring chinook smolts released in the Lochsa River, 1976.

Date	Location	Number per pound	Amount
April 27	White Sand Creek Bridge	23	48,300
April 28	White Sand Creek Bridge	23	66,700
April 29	White Sand Creek Bridge	23	20,700
April 30	White Sand Creek Bridge	23	19,550
May 3	White Sand Creek Bridge	23	<u>11,500</u>
Total			166,750

This year was the first in which the State Fish Hatchery near Mullan received eyed chinook eggs. From about 250,000 eggs taken to the hatchery last fall, we received 179,550 fry on June 22. These fry were released in Brushy Fork Creek off the Packer Meadow Road where it crosses the creek, approximately 8 miles from the mouth. There is excellent spawning gravels in this section and the Forest Service has been clearing log jams for better passage conditions. This area has not been planted previously but is included in the annual aerial spawning ground survey. The Hatchery Superintendent at Mullan stated he could handle additional eggs this next fall and if available and authorized, additional eggs will be delivered.

Submitted by:

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